

Dummy the Sketch of a Newspaper Page Layout (Visual Communication Design and Creativity)

Hussaini Garba Mohammed
Daily Trust Newspaper, Utako – Jabi Abuja Nigeria

Abstract: Background/Significance: The dearth of professional designers is affecting the profession of creativity; therefore, the need for more expertise in visual communication in Nigeria and globally cannot be overemphasised. Therefore, this study will bring to the fore the need to develop interest in and strive towards attainment of professionalism as media designers, through the presentation aimed at enabling ease of understanding in how to produce high quality visual/graphic designs, and media content and to contribute toward the concept of creative innovation on and off-line media layout solutions.

Objectives

1. The goal is to popularise a new idea and change people's behavior, towards the content of communication (off-line media), its styling and the method of delivery.
2. Proper Assessment of what is intended for communication; how best to present it, creatively; utilization of graphical presentation; the most effective medium; harping on how communication designers target their audience for greater attention retention.

Methodology: Due to its important role in both business and technical writing, a more traditional methodology of visual communication in both business and technical creativity is practiced when a designers or students present or give a chance to design or present a paper as a chance to see the communication visually, either during an assignment or during the practical test/examination, as well as chance to use some software like: power point, CorelDraw Graphic suits., Adobe InDesigned CS4, Page Maker, e.t.c

The methodology use for this abstract research work to address the objective of this study was used from Visual Communication hands books, which explore the key theoretical areas in visual communication and presents the research methods utilize in exploring how people see and how visual communication occurs.

Key word: Dummy: The Most important aspects of Newspaper

Introduction

Any newspaper or magazine around the world cannot be or become the best design newspaper, or newspaper assessment cannot be done without good layout of the newspaper, which was the foundation of any print media industry to give significant appearance of their publication. The layout which also judge the value of the paper, give visual of the paper unique identity the creative concept design, layout and paper make up.

Dummy sheet: is one of the most important aspects of newspaper or magazine production and the entire edition of newspaper to be made with an excellent design. In reality good newspaper design is more important today than ever.

Dummy sheet can be define as a way or concept of placing photos, illustrations and stories on a page, which is very important for professional designers to bring their ideas and hypotheses on readers visual communication, which convey a message from a client to a particular audience.

The pressure is on for newspapers editors, page planners and newspaper designers, which identify how important it is for any media house to have a good dummy layout and the dummy become even more sophisticated in their use of the grid, typography, alternate story forms and layouts.

Good newspaper design doesn't cost money; it can actually save money by making your presentation of news more efficient as well as attractive. Attention is everything in newspaper advertising, your ad therefore must be beautifully designed, stand out in contrast to all of the others on the pages. Try to create a good professionally designed advertisement, because ad is one of the investment returns in newspaper industry. You need visual impact, a distinctive border, font, angel, placement to stand out on the page and make it very easily readable, and at the same time boost reading speed, and readers to buy your paper because the design or headlines, which include pictures, attract them from far away.

A good dummy layout can help. How? With good strategies of workflow from the beginning of your layout, I believed that can make the paper visually appealing to the eye, but also tell/show the importance of the story through good design page layout.

This article describes a study of a dummy sheet which identify the combing words, pictures, and illustrations (cartoons), a well-conceived visual communication design in forms, persuades, organizes stimulates, locates, identifies, attracts attention of the readers; eye-tracking during newspaper reading and provides a memorable experience. Thus eyes-tracking method provides insight into how the individual reader perceives newspaper spread.

In another definition the dummy sheet is described as serving as the skeleton, framework or replica of a newspaper or magazine that is produced by either page planner, page editor/production editor, sub-editor or planning unit of a newspaper that shows the space advert, picture and editorial content; all graphical elements and the amount of space allotted each item.

The aim of this paper presentation is to help students acquire practical graphics design presentation skills needed for their studies at the tertiary education level; during their research work and adequately prepare them to be able to apply the ideas or function effectively in the their workings.

The paper cannot be well understood without a full definition of visual communication. "Visual communication as the name suggests is communication through visual aid and is described as the conveyance of ideas and information in forms that can be read or looked at."

Aldous Huxley highly regarded as one of the most prominent explorers of visual communication and sight –related theories, in one of his most famous quotes says, "the more you see, the more you know". He also described "seeing" as being the sum of sensing, selecting and perceiving. Therefore, to what degree can newspapers designers or page planners predict the visual behavior of their readers? Is it especially difficult to predict the effect of certain layout elements?

We all know that the concept of placing photos, cartoon/illustration and stories on a page is important and more than just dummy sheet a mechanical process. In other words, it is seen as small version of an entire page or page of newspaper. Gridlines usually divide a dummy sheet and the grid especially in a computer-made dummy. Grid is a set of non-printing lines that helps editors or page designers guide in placement of elements appropriately.

Sample Newspaper layout dummy: Here is a sample dummy drawn up for a news page. Though newspapers have their own method of drawing up dummies, they mostly adhere to the modular design format which is seen as the best the design of beautiful, easy to read newspaper pages as against the older irregular format that has text legs criss-crossing and intertwining others in a confusing mass; or the layout that combines both.

Can you see here how the dummy translates into the final designed page?

Take note you should always include these in your design page dummy layout: -

- i. Section name
- ii. Quotes
- iii. Image boxes, these can include dimensions and instructions for designers
- iv. Cutline's (captions) and credits for photos
- v. Story name (sign) and paragraph styles

It is important to include as much information as possible for your designers.

Check below for an example of what you might include to design your pages.



Figure 1.

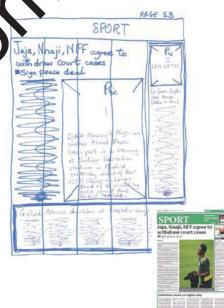


Figure 2.



Figure 3.

The way articles are displayed as you can see above in Figure 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 the size the headlines tell readers the importance you are given to each story. Bigger, more prominently placed equals more important. Smaller, less prominently placed equals less important. Who has not at times looked at a publication and said, "of course, they put that story on page 22 or 33 at the bottom, they are biased against that topic," or "of course that's a big story, and a big headlines, right on the cover, because they are obsessed with that topic."

That is why the process of placing elements on a page involved decision made by editors; usually editors are responsible for certain section of a large publication. In a newspaper for instance, a "wire editor" may be responsible for choice and placement of national and international news, or choice the picture which goes with the cover or news inside the page. A sports editor will be responsible for sport pages.

Drop Quotes

As indicated in figure 3 and also within the sport page. Drop quotes are short pieces of text that are inserted in-between columns and given a bold format. Drop quotes are assumed to guide the scanning process towards the text; serving as entry point into deeper reading. Drop quotes are often central quotes from the text, bringing out the essence of the issue, or standing in a clear relationship to the headline. It seems that drop quotes do exactly what they are meant to do: Attract reader attention.

However, drop quotes not only attract attention. The data from the current study show that texts with drop quotes are also read for a significantly longer time.

This involves important topics, as well as knowledge of the mechanical way, a publication gets made, and the operation of the publication that makes everything sets done correctly, and on time.

As cars, cloth and building change with times, so do publications of newspapers design change. You may check the design of some newspaper for instance, in 60s, 80s, you will realize that the design in those days design and today's new media are goes with new digital innovation. For instance, 8 -col broadsheet newspapers used to be standard, now column tend to be wider, five or six to a page. Also common today is the concept of "modular design." Stories are placed to give a horizontal feel to a page, and rounded off into rectangles. Old style design emphasized "vertical make-up." Headlines were often 1-col, and stories ran

dawn the page vertically. Modern design emphasizes “horizontal make-up;” headlines are multi-column, and stories seem to stretch horizontally across the page.

However, as for the dummy sheets or dummy pages, they don't come from some other editors, depending on the newspaper in-house policy, in some other newspaper media houses, dummy come from the advertising department or head of advert department, pages arrived at an editor's desk with ads already aid in. Editors are expected to fill the space left over after the ads ad often page planner or designers know the size of the ads, the space, designed to accommodate both editorial text and advert inside the pages. It also shows the date of the edition, volume number, as well as a page and section number

Types of Dummy Sheets

There are two type of dummy sheet which are produce I the newspaper or magazine these are:

(1) Edition Dummy

(2) Page Dummy

Edition Dummy: Refers to a sheet that contains the number of pages in an edition and the element that are allotted to each page of a newspaper. In the other words, it is lined sheet produced by a production editor or planning unit of a newspaper that indicates what is given to news stories, features articles, adverts, opinions, comments and editorial and so on. Production of this sheet is largely determined by the number of adverts the newspaper received from advert department either from regional, outstation or within the location area of the newspaper.

Thur. March 15, 2012 Vol 29 No: 8			
1 News	28 Trust Int'l	KUST	29 back
2 News	27 Trust Int'l	30 Star Feature	35 Sports
3 News	26 Trust Int'l	Digest	32 Sports
4 News	25 TRUST Int'l	32 Digest	33 News
5 News	24 FACTORY News	33 Politic	34 News
6 News	23 Business	34 Politic	35 News
7 News	Business	35	36 Opinion
8 News	1 STAR 1 DAILY 1 DAILY NEWS	36	37 Letter
9 News	21 Suntrust	37 City News	38 Opinion
10 News	20 Success	38 News extra	39 Opinion
11 News	19 Business	39 News extra	40 Environment
12 News	UNITED NATIONS	40 Education	41 Environment
13 MTN	16 Photo News	41 Education	42 Environment
14 Warri	15	42 Education	43 Environment

Figure 4. Dummy

Page Dummy: is produced by page-editor that depicts how he wants the page to appear the following day. It's produce to contain and show the column and inches headlines, stories, picture (s) and other elements should occupy. It is indicates which headline and story is given prominence on the page.

Guidelines for Preparing Page Dummy

Below are five guidelines, which should be applicable to all pages. However, there are certain conditions and situation when front and back pages, because of their crucial and strategic importance, may require additional and more creative guidelines and strategies.

- i. It is strongly important to ensure that the dummy sheet is produce in column at least six or seven in case of newspaper and three to two if it is magazine. However, this relies on what a newspaper house adopts as its house style.
- ii. The page planner or designers should determine to locations of the necessary features (standing elements) of a page. These basic and mandatory attributes are nameplate (front and back pages), folio, margin and imprint (in case of back page)
- iii. It is also paramount to indicate areas where colour is applicable. This particular related to front and back pages.
- iv. Anybody who plans a page is expected to sketch the areas where, advert headlines by-lines, entire article (s), picture(s) – by using square box-should fill.
- v. In case where quote box window is needed, the planner must indicate that by using question marks at the area (s) he wants it to appear.

Importance of Dummy

- i. It ensure element in newspaper and magazine are place at the suitable location in the pages
- ii. It helps in giving newspaper and magazine unique identity and appearances.
- iii. It eases and fastens the work of computer operator who produce the pages
- iv. It ensures stories and pictures are given their deserved prominences on a page or edition
- v. Dummy sheets also assist in reducing the design and other aesthetics mistakes that usually appear at the final stage of the published newspaper or magazine.

Acknowledgement

The contribution and collective data information from Media Trust Ltd., publishers of *Daily Trust* newspapers helped in the compilation of this study; and advice from the *Daily Trust* Editor, Habeeb I. Pindiga, Production Editor, Mr. Nii Ahi Bulley, Editorial Adverser, Mr. George Okoro and Sub-Editor Malam Dan'azumi Idris. However, and a lot of people have also helped one way or the other. I hope finally the share knowledge during this symposium will translate into sound decision and actions to improve the development prospects of media industry, as well as advancing the field of communication everywhere.

References:

1. Holmqvist, K. (2002): "How We Read Newspaper or Rather Not" Presentation at the SND/s conference in Malmo," August 2002.
2. Rayner, K. (1978) Eye Movements in Reading and Information Processing. Psychological Bulletin, 85 (3), 618-666.

3. Smith, K. (2005) 'Perception and the newspaper page. A critical Analysis (in) Handbook of Visual Communication Research: Theory methods, and Media, edited by Ken Smith (et al) page 81 – 95, Pub by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
4. www.theapa_perboy.com (accessing the best front pages of newspapers around the world)
5. www.layoutexecutive.com
6. Garcia, M. R. and Stark P. (1991). Eyes on the News. St. Petersburg, Florida: The Poynter Institute.
7. Nwabueze (2011: p77). News Management & Production/ introductory test, published by Top Sheivs publishers, Imo state in Nigeria
8. Okaye (2000: p 28 – 29) News editing and Production in the computer age published by Nbeyi & Associates Nigeria Ltd, Lagos, Nigeria

Downloaded from www.asdfjournals.com